



NEWS RELEASE

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WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

38 DEFENDANTS CHARGED IN CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE HUNDREDS OF KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE, METH AND MARIJUANA IN THE KC METRO AREA

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that 38 defendants from Kansas and Missouri have been charged in federal court as part of a conspiracy to smuggle drugs into the United States and distribute cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana in the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area. Five separate but related criminal complaints filed in Kansas and Missouri are part of a nationwide operation that involves 135 defendants in several states and the Republic of Mexico.

According to Graves, the conspiracy allegedly involved a large-scale drug organization originating in the Republic of Mexico, with drug supply lines through central California, which has supplied large quantities of cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana to customers in several states, including Kansas and Missouri, since 1997. An affidavit supporting three criminal complaints filed in Kansas this morning alleges that a cartel of Mexican nationals, many of whom are originally from the Mexican state of Michoacan and its vicinity, have established an ongoing distribution pipeline through which hundreds of kilograms of cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana have been transported to the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Three separate but related criminal complaints were filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas this morning, charging 31 defendants with conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, more than 500 grams of methamphetamine, and some amount of marijuana. A separate but related criminal complaint was filed in the Western District of Missouri this morning charging three additional defendants with conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine. A separate but related criminal complaint was filed in the Western District of Missouri on Friday, November 1, 2002, charging four additional defendants with conspiracy to distribute 500 grams of methamphetamine. Of those 38 defendants, 29 are in federal custody and the others remain at large.

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Among the 11 defendants charged in the first criminal complaint filed in Kansas this morning are: **Jorge Rios-Garcia**, a/k/a Jose Acosta, a/k/a “Zorra”, a/k/a “Al Capone,” 49; **Gonzalo Perez-Jaracurro**, a/k/a “G”, a/k/a “Chelo,” 29; **Rejino Rolando Alfaro-Ferrer**, a/k/a “Papito,” 45; **Raul Zelaya**, 47; **Miguel I. Zamora**, a/k/a “Siciliano”, a/k/a “Italiano,” 37; and **Marco Antonio Madrigal**, a/k/a “Marcos”, a/k/a “Marquitos,” 27; all of Kansas City, Kansas. They are each charged with conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, more than 500 grams of methamphetamine, and some amount of marijuana, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas.

Among the 10 defendants charged in a second criminal complaint filed in Kansas this morning are: **Alejandro Moreno**, a/k/a “Cuadrado”, a/k/a “Cuadro,” 29; **Nicolas Najera, Jr.**, a/k/a “Pato,” 23; **Ramiro Barajas Zamora**, a/k/a “Pollo,” 21; **Martin Alejandre**, 22; **Pablo R. Ramirez**, a/k/a “Pablito”, a/k/a “Peavey”, a/k/a “Easy,” 25; **Crystal Ann Marin**, 21; **Leticia Marquez**, a/k/a “Lettie,” 47; **Mario Zamora Barajas**, a/k/a “Casper,” 18; and **Antonio Alejo**, a/k/a “Cuervo,” 27; all of Kansas City, Kansas. They are each charged with conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, more than 500 grams of methamphetamine, and some amount of marijuana, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas.

Among the 10 defendants charged in a third criminal complaint filed in Kansas this morning are: **Steven J. Garcia**, 41; **David K. Cortez**, 39; **Luis Ochoa-Perez**, 33; **Carlos M. Garcia**, a/k/a “Coach,” 45; **Francisco Navarro**, a/k/a “Paco,” 38; **Jaime Espinoza**, 31; **Manuel Najera**, a/k/a “Meno,” 26; **Albert Franco**, 32; and **Elias Perez**, 41; all of Kansas City, Kansas. They are each charged with conspiracy to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, more than 500 grams of methamphetamine, and some amount of marijuana, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kansas.

Among the three defendants charged in Missouri this morning is **Kerriem O. Wilson**, a/k/a “Woo-Soo,” 30, of Kansas City, Mo. They are each charged with conspiring to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Mo.

The four defendants charged in Missouri on Friday, November 1, 2002, are **Santiago N. Medrano**, 29; **Alejandro Medrano**, a/k/a “Alex,” 27; **Francisco Javier Ibarra**, a/k/a “Panchin,” 26; and **Alejandrina Medrano**, a/k/a “Chata,” 23, all of Kansas City, Kansas. They are each charged with conspiring to distribute 500 grams of methamphetamine, according to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Mo.

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The complaints filed in Kansas this morning, Graves said, allege that two Los Angeles men purchased large quantities of drugs from an organization that smuggled them into the United States from Mexico and distributed them in the Kansas City metropolitan area. According to the affidavit, **Rios-Garcia** was a major drug customer who received large quantities of cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana from his California suppliers. **Zamora** and **Alfaro-Ferrer**, the complaint alleges, have been customers and close associates of **Rios-Garcia**, and are dealers of large quantities of cocaine and methamphetamine in the Kansas City area, supplying lower-level drug dealers with quantities of drugs for resale. Many of these conspirators, Graves added, allegedly operate or are employed by businesses associated with automobiles, including tow services, junkyards, car washes and maintenance facilities.

The complaint filed in Missouri this morning, Graves said, alleges the defendants were responsible for the supply and distribution of hundreds of kilograms of cocaine in the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area. This organization, Graves said, is believed to be involved in smuggling drugs from Central and South America into the United States, where their accomplices assisted in the distribution of the drugs to their subordinates and to lower-level dealers or brokers and their subordinates, including **Wilson**.

The complaint filed in Missouri on November 1, 2002, Graves said, alleges that **Santiago Medrano** and **Alejandro Medrano** are responsible for the importation of methamphetamine brought into Kansas City. **Francisco Javier Ibarra** and **Alejandrina Medrano** (the sister of **Santiago** and **Alejandro Medrano** and wife of **Ibarra**), the complaint alleges, helped to facilitate the trafficking of methamphetamine by this organization. This organization, Graves said, allegedly supplied lower-level drug dealers with quantities of methamphetamine for resale.

U.S. Attorney Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the complaints are simply accusations, and are not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

The case involving today's criminal complaints is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles E. Ambrose, while the case involving the November 1, 2002, criminal complaint is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys David A. Barnes and Abram McGull, II. The nationwide operation was coordinated by the Special Operations Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Administration. It was also investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Kansas City Metropolitan Methamphetamine Task Force, the I-35/I-70 Drug Task Force, and various police departments and county sheriffs' offices, including the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department, the Johnson and Wyandotte County (Kansas) Sheriff's Departments, the Southern California Drug Task Force, and the Los Angeles High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force, and other federal and local law enforcement agencies.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow